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"(b) The Government examined the petition and found that all the lands referred to in the petition were not in the occupation of the petitioners. Some were in the occupation of caste-Hindus. The Government have, however, ordered that assignable banjar lands in the village be assigned to landless poor applicants likely to take to direct cultivation at a rate not exceeding five acres of dry land each, after evicting encroachers who are not landless and poor persons. The Government have also ordered that the lands should not be assigned to persons who own five acres of dry or more."

SRI M. VEERABHADRAM :—" Sir, as most of these people are Burma evacuees and most of them are Harijan landless poor people, will the Government categorically direct the District Collector to assign land to these particular Harijans?" 8-50 a.m.

THE HON. SRI M. A. MANICKAVELU NAICKER :—" The Collector has been directed to assign the lands to the landless poor, and the Harijans and the Burma evacuees also come under this category, I suppose."

SRI P. PUNDARIKAKSHACHARYULU :—" May I know, Sir, what is the extent of land available for assignment to the landless poor?"

THE HON. SRI M. A. MANICKAVELU NAICKER :—" I want notice."

SRI K. GOVINDA RAO :—" Why did it take such a long time as five long years to dispose of this matter, please?"

THE HON. SRI M. A. MANICKAVELU NAICKER :—" There seem to have been some disputes over that; and naturally it took a long time to enquire."

SRI G. LATCHANNA :—" In assigning the lands is there any distinction made or preference given to the landless poor only, as between Harijans, Burma evacuees and the backward classes?"

THE HON. SRI M. A. MANICKAVELU NAICKER :— " Landless poor are landless poor; but it depends upon the particular officer. He may have a slight bias for the Burma evacuees."

Assignment of lands in Anakapalle taluk, Visakhapatnam district.

* 345 Q.—SRI K. GOVINDA RAO : Will the Hon. the Minister for Land Revenue be pleased to state—

(a) whether a number of representations were made to the Government by the Harijan labourers of Pedamushidivada, a village in Anakapalle taluk, Visakhapatnam district, requesting assignment of banjar lands in the village to them in preference to the landlord who had also applied for the same; and

(b) if so, what the Government had done so far in this respect?

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THE HON. SRI M. A. MANICKAVELU NAICKER :—" (a) A petition, dated 28th August 1952 was received on the subject from the Harijans, etc., of the village.

" (b) Attention is invited to the answer to clause (b) of Legislative Assembly Question No. 344 (194) (Starred) by Sri M. Veerabhadram, M.L.A."

SRI K. GOVINDA RAO :—" Were specific instructions to the Collector of Visakhapatnam issued by the Government that the banjar lands should be assigned only to the landless poor and not to the political sufferer? "

THE HON. SRI M. A. MANICKAVELU NAICKER :—" The hon. Member's conscience will be satisfied if I say that the application by the political sufferer had been rejected."

Questions 346 to 348.

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" Sir, questions Nos. 346, 347 and 348 all relate to the same subject. I shall give the answers together for all these questions."

MR. SPEAKER :—" They will all be taken up together. Mr. Gopalakrishnan's question will be taken up first."

Price of rice in Malabar.

* 346 Q.—SRI P. K. GOPALAKRISHNAN : Will the Hon. the Minister for Finance be pleased to state—

(a) whether the price of rice supplied in Malabar through ration shops has been enhanced recently and if so at what rates; and

(b) whether the Government have received any representations that the price be lowered to pre-decontrol rates and if so, the action taken thereon?

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" (a) Yes, there has been a slight increase. The present average retail selling prices are reported to be Rs. 22–12–6 per Imperial maund for I sort rice and Rs. 21–5–8 per maund for II sort rice.

" (b) No representation has been received except a resolution tabled by Sri T. C. Narayana Nambiar, M.L.A., recommending the reduction of the price of rice issued through ration shops in Malabar to the 1946 level.

It is not possible for the Government to reduce the price of rice in Malabar as uniform pool prices have been fixed for the State as a whole, on a ' no profit, no loss ' basis, taking into account the total quantity of rice under Government control that will be available for distribution in the current year (imported as well as locally procured) and the total cost thereof. The slight enhancement in selling price is due mainly to the increase in purchase price of rice from the several sources of supply. The Government have issued